THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) No, Sir.

(b) In view of (a) above, does not arise.

Pick Pocketing in Buses in the Capital

†1160. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) what is Government's reaction to the newsitem published in the 'Punjab Kesri' dated the 31st May, 2000 under the caption, "Bus walon ne de rakha hai jebkatron ko dhanda karne ka signal"; and

(b) what measures are being taken by Government to check this menace in the Capital?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) During the first six months of the current year, 151 cases of pickpocketing were challaned in the Courts and 156 persons were arrested. No instance of any nexus between the pickpockets, bus drivers/conductors, and the local police came to the notice during the said period.

The measures taken to check the menace include launching of special drives against pickpockets; setting up of police pickets at various places; surprise check of buses plying on vulnerable routes; detailment of police personnel in plain clothes in buses from time to time; close surveillance of suspected persons; and issuance of instructions to bus drivers/conductors to take their buses directly to the nearest police station or to seek help from available Police Control Room van in the event of any incident of pickpocketing inside the bus.

Demand for creation of Autonomous Council for Laddakh and Jammu

†1161. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH 'SURYA': Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a demand regarding creation of an autonomous council has been made from time to time from Jammu

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.